

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 14, 2022

**First West Nile Virus Mosquito Sample of 2022 Identified in Harris County**

*HCPH identifies first WNV sample, protect yourself and others this mosquito season*

**HOUSTON** - Harris County Public Health's (HCPH) Mosquito and Vector Control Division (MVCD) has confirmed its first West Nile virus (WNV) sample of 2022.

The sample was identified and collected in the northeast area of Harris County. MVCD will begin treating the affected area this evening. For interactive maps of mosquito-borne disease activity, services and proposed treatment, [please visit our website](#).

**About Mosquito-Borne Diseases**

Mosquitoes are present throughout the year, however peak activity occurs in warmer weather, specifically from May through October. Out of the 56 species of mosquitoes found in Harris County, only a handful transmit diseases, such as WNV, Saint Louis Encephalitis, Chikungunya, Dengue and Zika.

"Our Mosquito and Vector Control Division has more than 50 years of experience serving Harris County and protecting residents from mosquito-borne diseases. When mosquito samples are confirmed positive for mosquito-borne disease, our team moves quickly to address and treat the area of concern. We encourage residents to take precautions this mosquito season and reach out to us if they have questions, concerns or are in need expert advice," said Chris Fredregill, Director of MCVD.

As we move into the summer months and spend more time outdoors, please remember to protect yourself and your family from mosquito-borne disease. Remember the three Ts "***Tip, Toss, and Take Action***" this mosquito season and follow the tips below to stay safe from WNV and other mosquito-borne diseases.

**Tip**

Heavy rains during the summer months in the Houston region can create a "perfect storm" for mosquitoes to breed. Follow these simple tips to prevent mosquito breeding sites around your home, especially right after a weather event:

- ***Tip*** or empty standing water from pet bowls, flowerpots, tires, buckets, and other containers.
- If you have a birdbath, change its water every three to five days.

**Toss**

Mosquitos can also breed in small areas where stagnant water might be hidden from the human eye. Practice the following tips to reduce mosquito breeding in those covered spots:

*HCPH is the local public health agency for the Harris County, Texas jurisdiction. It provides a wide variety of public health activities and services aimed at improving the health and well-being of the Harris County community.*

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- **Toss** out debris, trash, and other unwanted items around your home.
- Clean out clogged rain gutters.
- Keep outdoor trash bins closed and avoid overfilling them.
- Do not sweep lawn clippings, leaves, or litter into storm drains to prevent water from flowing and unnecessary flooding.
- Minimize opportunities for standing water to collect by removing flower pots, buckets, tires, and other water-collecting objects you no longer need.

### **Take Action**

Here are several ways to **take action** of your environment and reduce mosquito populations:

- Dump standing water with larvicides in areas where water cannot be covered, emptied, or removed and will not be used for drinking. Larvicides are a type of pesticide applied to kill mosquitoes in their early stages of development (larvae) before they become biting adults. They are sold in the forms of liquid, tablets, pellets, granules, and briquettes and are available in most hardware stores. Larvicides are safe to use for the environment. Follow the instructions of the particular larvicide product you are using.
- Make sure to turn off outdoor faucets to prevent leaks completely; fix any faucets that are constantly leaking.
- Keep tight-fitting screens on doors and windows.

### **Repel**

When using mosquito repellent, keep these points in mind:

- Use as directed by the instructions on the product.
- Do not use insect repellents on babies younger than two months of age.
- Do not use products containing oil of lemon eucalyptus or para-menthane-diol on children younger than three years of age.
- Apply an EPA-registered repellent on yourself and your loved ones when outdoors.
- When possible, wear long sleeves, pants, and socks.

For other mosquito bite and breeding prevention tips and resources, follow our [HCPH Facebook page](#) or visit [hcphtx.org/MVCDResources](http://hcphtx.org/MVCDResources).